DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 068 969 CS 200 219

AUTHOR	Manchikes, Alice , Ed.
TITLE	The Role of the High School Newspaper: Problems and Solution.
INSTITUTION	Kentucky Council of Teachers of English, Louisville.
PUB DATE	72
NOTE	26p.
JOURNAL CIT	Kentucky English Bulletin; v22 n1 p7-28 Fall 1972
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Attitudes; Civil Liberties; Cocurricular Activities; *High School Curriculum; High School Students; Journalism; *Press Opinion; Principals; *School Newspapers; School Publications; *Secondary Education; Secondary School Teachers; *Student Rights; Student School Relationship

ABSTRACT

The question of whether a high school newspaper should act as a voice of official school opinion or should be an organ of dissent is discussed. A student editor argues that the school administration should recognize the students' right to freedom of the press. A teacher-sponsor argues that the newspaper should be part of the curriculum, acting both as a public relations medium and a voice of student opinion. A principal argues that the newspaper can be an expression of the students' search for truth, but that a line needs to be drawn between freedom of the press and the freedom to disrupt orderly educational processes. A librarian argues that if responsible dissent were encouraged by administrators there would be no need for underground newspapers. The Attorney General of Kentucky states that school publications are free to express opinion as long as it is not libelous, obscene, pornographic, inflammatory, or disruptive of school activities. To help schools solve this problem, a journalism curriculum guide for use in various courses is discussed. (DI)

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Kentucky English Bulletin

THE ROLE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTION

Volume 22 Fall 1972 Number 1

Published by the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

ED 060707

Kentucky English Bulletin

Member NCTE Information Exchange Agreement

Volume 22 Fall 1972 Number 1

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CONTENTS

Page

Foreword 3

The Problem: Differing Views

A Kentucky Student-Editor's View of the High School Newspaper by Susan Jones 7

A Kentucky Teacher-Sponsor's View of the High School Newspaper by Katherine Kirwan 9

A Kentucky Principal's View of the High School Newspaper by Dan Sullivan 12

Underground High School Newspapers in Kentucky by Alice Manchikes 20

The Courts and the High School Press
An Opinion of the Attorney General of Kentucky
by Martin Glazer 21

A Solution to the Problem:

A Journalism Curriculum Guide for Use in Secondary Schools in Kentucky by Glen Kleine 23

Published by the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English, with the cooperation and assistance of the Department of English, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Kentucky.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Articles are invited and should be submitted to the editor.

SUBSCRIPTION: Subscription to the *Bulletin* is included in the annual membership dues ($2), which should be sent to Mrs. Katherine C. Lawrence, 109 East Brashear Avenue, Bardstown, Kentucky 40004.

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FOREWORD

This issue of the *Bulletin* is a departure from the usual format and content. Instead of literary criticism and suggested teaching aids, this issue contains articles of opinion on the role of the high school newspaper, with one exception. The article by Glen Kleine gives a preview of the new journalism curriculum guide which is now at the printers and should be available in the fall of 1972. Because the English teacher is usually the adviser to the high school newspaper, it is appropriately within the realm of the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English to devote an issue of the *Bulletin* to the problem of the high school newspaper. And problem it is. In many schools the new English teacher, diploma in hand, is greeted with the news that he has been appointed faculty adviser for the newspaper. This is not necessarily because the new teacher has a minor in journalism, which he may not have, but because the new teacher gets the extra work load and the undesirable assignments. It is an undesirable assignment because the teacher-adviser is in the middle, caught in the cross-fire of conflicting concepts of what role the newspaper should play. In this issue, the student-editor presents an extreme or "radical" view, shared by many students but few, if any, administrators; the principal demonstrates the happy rapport possible in a successful communication with students; and the teacher-adviser speaks from the position of experience and recognition by colleagues as past President of the Kentucky Council for Education in Journalism. We hope that this issue presents both the facets of the problem and a solution.

Alice Manchikes
Guest Editor

STUDENT-EDITOR'S VIEW OF THE HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

By SUSAN JONES

The journalistic school year was off and running as my principal exclaimed, "This paper looks like an underground newspaper!" This first confrontation began a virtual war between the administration and the newspaper staff over the proper content of a high school newspaper.

It was not unusual for our principal to react in this way; principals have been reacting similarly all across the country when their students finally realize that the constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press has no age limit. Proving that this right belongs to high school students became the purpose of the school newspaper during the year that I was editor. In order to accomplish this goal it was necessary to change the content of the entire newspaper.

A typical high school newspaper consists of approximately eight pages. Of these eight pages, at least two pages, sometimes three or four, deal with sports events. The remaining pages are concerned with gossip and humor columns, unimportant news articles, crossword puzzles, student-and-teacher-of-the-month, pictures, pro-administration or school spirit editorials, and a few newsworthy articles. Having decided that this childish presentation of a newspaper was not worth working on, the staff determined that our paper would not be a typical high school newspaper. And it wasn't.

Topics which should be of concern to all students were given first priority. Each month we based the entire newspaper around topics such as student rights, the problems of minority groups, marijuana issues, thoughts of '72 presidential candidates on student concerns, and women's liberation, always applying them to our high school.

Much of the newspaper was opinionated. In our statement of editorial policy we invited all students, teachers, parents, and administrators to submit opposing opinions: "Rather than establish an editorial policy as has been the custom, we of the editorial board have chosen to maintain a free and flexible press, presenting as many varied opinions as possible. It is our intention to make the editorial page a forum of diverse views more truly representative of the student body."

I do not wish to give the impression that we felt news has no place in the high school newspaper. Because the paper was published monthly, it was very difficult to print news that was truly new. Therefore, our news consisted of very important school happenings: student awards, selected sports events, student council actions. The remaining unimportant events, (club news, announcements, etc) which usually comprise the main format of a high school newspaper, we combined into one column.

Aside from editorial and news articles, we tried some new techniques in features and layout. We experimented with a full page cartoon strip,

picture spreads with various themes, and front page editorial cartoons. In reality, our newspaper was more like a magazine, but we felt that this was as it should be, for a monthly newspaper could be nothing more than boring and repetitive.

The majority of the student body did not like our interpretation of a high school newspaper, but they thought about it, even though their concern was just to decide that they did not like it. This became another of our goals, to make the students think. Our school has become so apathetic that it was a major accomplishment to waken the student body. The very fact that it took an editorial insulting the students to make them read the newspaper illustrates this point. As a result of the insulting editorial (in which students were called apathetic), the dream of our editorial policy became reality for a brief time. A poll was circulated by a sociology class to determine student satisfaction with the newspaper, resulting in letters to the editor. Thus for a brief time the editorial pages truly became a "forum of diverse objective views." This peak of interest soon dipped back to apathetic indifference and throughout the rest of the year we had only two or three letters to the editor per issue from students. Teachers contributed only two letters to the editor during the entire year; instead of complaining to us they complained to the principal. Parents also complained to the administration, voicing no criticism to the paper. The school administration contributed no letters to the editor.

We did gain some measure of freedom of the press for the newspaper by the end of the year. I doubt that this freedom will last very long, perhaps a year or two, depending upon future staffs. It is very hard to fight administrators, boards of education, teachers, students, and parents all at the same time. Perhaps we changed the attitude of our principal slightly; it is more likely that we simply prompted him to insure himself against future staffs like ours.

The proper content of the high school newspaper will remain an issue for years to come. However, if high school is to prepare students for life in a free society, students must be permitted to exercise their freedoms in school activities. This means that administrators must change their attitudes about the proper content of the high school newspaper.

The high school newspaper must be first of all the place for students to practice that freedom of the press they read about in American history and government classes. Students must also learn the responsibility that goes along with this freedom. Otherwise they will never become truly involved members of American society but, instead, another silent uncaring majority. Second, the high school newspaper must discuss the problems and concerns of all students, problems involving not only the school but the community as well. Perhaps nothing will be solved by presenting these problems in the high school press, but the problem will be aired, the first step toward any solution. Third, the

high school newspaper must be a newspaper, a medium of information and reporting. In order that this type of newspaper may become a reality, students must be given responsibility and permitted to think for themselves instead of being told what to think and say by school authorities.

AN ADVISOR LOOKS AT THE HIGH SCHOOL PRESS

By KATHERINE KIRWAN

Adviser of The Chit Chat, Waggener High School, Louisville, and former President of the Kentucky Council for Education in Journalism

The production of the high school newspaper can provide one of the finest learning experiences in the high school curriculum. Or one of the worst.

To clarify these ambivalent situations as they exist in hundreds of high schools today, let us examine first the merits of a publications program as it can be and is being implemented successfully today. Then to complete the discussion, let us point out the factors that can made and, all too frequently, do result in frustrating, disillusioning, and ineffectual experiences for students, teachers, and administrators alike.

From my particular point of view, the newspaper should be curricular, not extra-curricular. Print journalism should be taught as an elective course within the English department. As prerequisite to staff work, the beginning course leads to newspaper production which is an advanced course, a laboratory to put in practice all the skills acquired. Needless to say, academic credit should be given for both.

Does this situation imply some control and structure? Do staffers have any responsibility to the school? Is the administration responsible to the staff in any way? Does the Board of Education have any responsibility to the staff and they to the Board? The answer to all these is "Emphatically, yes."

If these concepts are accepted, then is the staff to be censored by the adviser, the school administration, and the superintendent? If so, then is this not a pristine example of "managed news" and does this not violate our sacred belief in freedom of the press? Will an underground newspaper arise under these conditions? These are the questions that pose the problems which require resolution.

It is extremely important that all concerned understand the functions of a high school paper and the journalism program.

The newspaper can be a valuable aid to education and to the administration, and an important medium to meet the needs of students and other publics.

Properly taught, journalism not only offers the student many opportunities to learn to write well but gives excellent opportunities for creativity and critical thinking. The journalism student and newspaper staffer learn how to work well with others; to develop social, ethical, cultural, and business skills while training themselves; to read with more discrimination and to appreciate the powers of the press and mass communications. Staff work also offers opportunities for development in art, stenography, and photography.

A good newspaper can help the administration in educating the community as to the work of the school and in molding public opinion. It is an excellent public information medium; a good administrator will recognize it as an implement to change attitudes and values, to unify students and faculty, to create a healthy atmosphere within the school, and to serve as liason between school and community.

While the student newspaper has an important public relations function that it generally performs quite well, public relations does not represent its primary function, for to do this means trying to operate under two flags.

Herein lies the difficult area. If the student paper is to provide an honest forum for student opinion, then the voice of the students must not be suppressed, even when critical or biased.

Throughout the country today, the high school press is becoming increasingly dedicated to the proposition that truth and news are inseparable and indestructible. This belief provides the framework upon which the mature student publication is built. It also frequently places the adviser, editor, and staff in a perilous position. Unfortunately, all readers do not value the basic principles of freedom of expression, for they place the principles of public relations first. This clearly indicates an appalling lack of information and understanding of the canons of journalism.

At the outset, the newspaper staff must understand the responsibilities related to publication. Editorial policy and position must be clearly delineated and adhered to. An editorial position on a controversial subject must be carefully researched, discussed, reasoned, and thoughtfully reached. If it is critical of the administration or of school policies, the staff position must be defensible. The staff must realize that honest newspapering requires the highest integrity and sense of responsibility.

Accuracy and fairness are the keystones of editorial policy. If disagreement with administrative policy permeates the editorial page, then the columns must be opened to individuals who disagree with the newspaper's stand.

Letters-to-the-Editor is a feature that affords students, faculty, administration, and parents opportunities to sound off on disagreements. Letters should be signed, and the staff must understand that the paper

must see that information is correct. If this kind of give-and-take exists, then the situation is healthy, but not necessarily happy.

In contrast, publications provide frustrating and disillusioning experiences if all copy is read by the principal who deletes and censors; if the editor and adviser are castigated by the Board of Education whenever dissent appears on the editorial page; if the adviser dictates editorial policy because of fear of reprisals; if writers of critical letters are attacked and threatened by teachers who disagree. These kinds of practices prevail in hundreds of high schools across this land. When they do occur, the function of the student publication is improperly understood and its strength diluted. The offended ones are talking out of both sides of their months. They approve of teaching democracy, the Bill of Rights, and the dignity of the individual in social studies, but they want to restrain the students from practicing these same principles in journalism. They view the newspaper only as a public relations gimmick, a notion which belongs to another day.

There must be a consistency of viewpoints if the high school experience is to be healthy and meaningful. If not, then the students may go underground. The newspaper will lose prestige; the student body and the readers will lose interest, and all segments of the school community will be cheated.

However, freedom of expression is not a one-way street. Each segment of this school community must understand its responsibility to the other.

Analogies are sometimes made between the high school newspaper and the daily press or the university press. This is a bit ridiculous. While most good daily papers admit a commitment to the public good, the newspaper is still private enterprise with the publisher in control. A good university publication today usually stands on its own financially and is not beholden to the trustees because of a share in tuition revenue. However, the high school newspaper is produced as part of the curriculum. The adviser's salary is paid by the Board; the publication room is provided by the school and facilities are maintained; frequently typewriters, dark rooms, and file cabinets are provided through public funds. These conditions still do not make the newspaper an organ of complete consent and agreement with the administration. But they are factors that figure in the whole question of understanding and fairness.

In English classes, there is never complete unanimity in poetry interpretation; in history courses, debate and discussion swirl excitedly on controversial issues; in humanities, there are many dissenting views in philosophical exploration. Yet the good teacher stresses always the importance of the considered opinion, responsible judgment, and respect for divergent ideas. So should this prevail within student newspaper production.

If the journalism program is to afford the ideal learning experiences that are entirely possible in any high school curriculum, then students,

teachers, and administration must be educated as to the concepts of mature journalism, and they must develop mutual respect. Certainly this takes time. Admittedly, this is not always possible.

Without question, the adviser is the key and pivotal figure. He must be sufficiently qualified to teach the skills necessary for newspaper production. He must guarantee free and open staff discussion. He must listen, advise, question, and suggest, but he must not shut off dissent. If he feels the staff presents a fair, honest, accurate editorial position, he must not rule it out, even if he disagrees. However, the staff must be prepared to defend its position.

Granted that advising a high school newspaper frequently means walking a tight rope precariously; that it requires considerable vision, conviction, and sense of integrity; that it sometimes entails enormous risks and numerous sleepless nights. However, the production of a forthright, vigorous, lively student publication, responsive to student, school, and community needs can be the most rewarding experience within the entire curriculum.

Too many graduates have told me this too many times for me to believe otherwise.

THE HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPER—DIALOGUE OR DISRUPTION?

DAN L. SULLIVAN, Principal
Ludlow High School, Ludlow, Kentucky

Student publications are always of vital concern for school administrators, and in view of today's explosive confrontation between students and administrators in this area, it becomes more important than ever that we examine constructive avenues to promote student expression.

The purpose of a school newspaper must be reexamined. A high school principal who expects the school newspaper to be a bit of poetry metaphorically extolling the virtues of the school administration is only looking for trouble, and he'll probably also be looking for additional sources of revenue to supplement the dying circulation of the paper.

Those of us who are entrusted with the leadership of young people must realize that in today's society we can no longer say that things are a certain way and have our words magically accepted as the truth. Truth, however, is the key word in this issue. The purpose of the high school newspaper must be to involve the student in what will hopefully be a lifelong search for truth, and we must guide him to base his search on rational principles.

Of course, a student given the freedom to seek out and write the truth might step on some administrative toes, but is this such a frightening

prospect? In dealing with youth, I believe it helps to drop our defensiveness and view ourselves and the situation in a humorous light.

Neither can we ignore the wealth of litigation in this area that clearly affirms the freedom of communication for high school students. The National Association of Secondary School Principals has published a legal memorandum concerning school publications which notes that student freedom of communication was upheld by the court in the major case of *Scoville v. Board of Education of Joliet Township High School,* even though the school paper had severely criticized the school administration.[1] The guidelines established in this legal memorandum will be of help to any administrator who seeks to avoid legal entanglements in the publication of his own school's newspaper.

Of course everyone enjoys a glowing account of himself and his situation in print, but this must never be a prerequisite for granting freedom of the press. At times issues of our school paper have caused me to comment that if I ever left the school system, the kids would be at a complete loss for words for at least a good six months, but I realize that this is to be expected because I am part of their world, and there are times when they want me to listen. Communication through the school paper can be used to build better understanding rather than to destroy relationships, so I choose to listen at these times. Too much of the conflict surrounding the publication of school papers has resulted from students' words falling on deaf administrative ears. You can't fool kids. We can't piously preach about freedom and responsibility without giving them a practical means of putting these principles into action.

Although being a receptive adult is important, it does not in all cases solve the problem. Even in school districts where all verbal and written protests are given consideration, there is still the problem of hard-core, deeply alienated students who want to change the whole of society and will resort to boycotts, sit-ins, walkouts, and riots to do it.[2] Certainly we cannot consider freedom of the press absolute, and it is here that a firm line must be drawn between freedom of speech and the freedom to disrupt the orderly processes of education. However, I believe the majority of high school students respond favorably when we take time to listen to what they have to say and they see that we do not regard them as Pavlovian dogs conditioned to recite in unison at the ring of an authoritative bell. It is our job to guide them to accept personal responsibility for their actions. Here I do not use the term responsibility as a synonym for duty to authority. Duty, as defined by Dr. Erich Fromm, is a concept in the realm of unfreedom, while responsibility is a concept in the realm of freedom, and freedom is a quality of being fully humane.

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[1] *A Legal Memorandum Concerning Student Publications,* National Association of Secondary School Principals, (October 1971), p. 1.

[2] Lesley H. Stowder, Jr., "The New American Success Story is Called Student Confrontation", *American School Board Journal,* (June 1970), p. 24.

Love, reason, interest, integrity and identity—they are the children of freedom.[3] We need a good sponsor for the school paper to help carry out these ideals.

The sponsor of the school paper should be an experienced, qualified member of the faculty, preferably one who has written for publication himself. Hopefully, he will be the type of person who will guide students to think and feel actively, to see something they have not seen before, and to create ideas relevant to human needs. Most of all, he should have an infectious enthusiasm for responsible journalism. Since I make no claim to personal fame in the field of journalism, I choose a faculty member in whom I have confidence to handle the paper wisely, and then I leave him alone and let him do his job. Certainly he will not function creatively if he is called on the carpet every time an issue of the school paper comes out or if his job is put in jeopardy by the words of the students. If he is afraid of his job, he will not do his job.

It is helpful if the faculty sponsor is given guidelines to follow at the beginning so that there is clear understanding of any limitations involved. The language of limits should be clear, impersonal and phrased in a way that doesn't challenge self-respect. Positive guidelines encouraging active, responsible participation on the part of both sponsor and students should be included as well. The guidelines should indicate that we have faith in students to handle the job well. We are going to get back exactly what we give out.

The school newspaper is a valuable learning tool, and its main purpose must be the individual growth of the student as he freely explores the total processes of life with all of its agreements and contradictions. We school administrators can best help his growth by offering him dialogue so that he will not seek disruption.

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[3] Erich Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope*, New York, Harper & Row, 1968, pp. 85-90.

UNDERGROUND HIGH SCHOOL NEWSPAPERS

ALICE MANCHIKES
Reference Librarian, Eastern Kentucky University
and former Vice-President of Secondary Section,
Kentucky Council of Teachers of English

Plato, in the fifth century B.C. advised, "You are young, my son, and as the years go by, time will change and even reverse many of your present opinions. Refrain therefore awhile from setting yourself up as a judge of the highest matters."[1] These sentiments, echoed in every generation by elders to the young, are typical of the attitudes of teachers,

principals, and school boards toward the expression of student opinion, particularly as expressed in high school newspapers. One Kentucky superintendent ordered a review of all controversial articles: "Unless such controversial material passes the high standards of truthfulness and integrity exemplified by the philosophy of life espoused by the school, it should not be published by the newspaper representing this school." And what is the philosophy of life espoused by the school: "Each youth should be free to select his goals and pursue a program leading to them," recommending "critical thinking that would enable him to live effectively in a changing society."[2]

Because there are school administrators who wish to control the school newspapers' content, students in many high schools in recent years have started underground newspapers. Diane Divorky in her Introduction to *How Old Will You Be In 1984?* explains the existence of the underground newspaper this way:

> Because the schools provide no platform for the students' outrage, no vehicle for their voice, they have been forced to find their own medium: the underground—or independent—newspaper. Perhaps 500 have sprung up over the past year or two (1967-68). Some last a year or more, others die after an issue. They range from slick, well-designed products to slap-dash mimeographed ventures. . . . The student voice in the underground papers is a totally different one from that which speaks in English class compositions in which teachers expect and get certain responses, where constraints operate against candor and personal style . . . here the students are themselves: original, sarcastic, vulnerable, earnest. They are speaking for themselves, talking to each other. What they present is a frank description of their world. Although they are often thought of as the radicals of their generation, they are the writers of tomorrow. Ultimately they will be writing the history and making the judgments on what we call the present.[3]

An investigation of underground papers in Kentucky revealed that there are a few scattered over the state, concentrated, as would be expected, in the urban areas, close to the state-supported colleges. Locating underground papers presented a problem. There are no formal channels of communication in requesting this kind of information. School administrators and student editors might be reluctant to admit the existence of any underground paper, and anyone requesting such information would be suspect. Admittedly, the following list of newspapers and their distribution locations is not exhaustive or comprehensive; however limited it is, it does provide a sampling of the underground high school newspapers existing in Kentucky in the past two years:

Lexington: *The Maidenhead,* Tates Creek High School
Lafayette Free Press, Lafayette High School
Paducah: *The Eulogy,* Tilghman High School

Louisville: *Uprising*, Seneca, Moore, and Valley High Schools
Versailles: *The Horny Dog*, Woodford County High School

Rumor reported one at Dixie Heights High School in Kenton County in the 1970-71 school year and another at Fort Thomas High Schools three or four years ago but no evidence in the form of copies of these papers was forthcoming. Copies of available papers reveal mimeographed booklets, stapled legal-size sheets ranging from two to ten pages, sporting obviously sensational names and lots of art work, much of it in the form of humorous satiric cartoons.

On Saturday, February 26, 1972, the *Courier-Journal* reported on an underground newspaper at Paducah's Tilghman. Titled *The Eulogy* and claiming a staff of "20 to 25" students, it was a four-page mimeographed publication, distributed in classrooms and halls at Tilghman. Dr. Davis Whitehead, Superintendent of Schools, commented that the paper and its distribution in the school violated two school board policies: by publishing it as a school paper and by soliciting funds or selling it on school property. Dr. Whitehead made another observation, "There was nothing wrong with the publication as such—in fact, it was well done *by some of the cream of our students.*"[4]

Dr. Whitehead's interesting remark about the type of student publishing *The Eulogy* seems to typify the kind of student involved in many underground high school newspapers. A National Merit Scholar was involved in one of Lexington's two underground high school newspapers; in another case in Central Kentucky, the son of one of Kentucky's well-known writers was an editor.

Dissatisfaction with the regular school newspaper is a theme of Kentucky's underground high school press. Again *The Eulogy* is typical in expressing a dissenting opinion:

> This newspaper [the official school paper] is a farce. There are no controversial articles in it. Not because none exists but because they have been stifled and forbidden by those in high places whose opinions differ from ours. . . . I call it a biased tool of the administration. While reading the paper one could get idea there is no dissent and there is good feeling between administration and student.

The *Lafayette Free Press*, Lexington, stated its purpose as "to offer an alternate outlet for expression of student ideas and opinions." *Uprising*, published at Louisville's Seneca High School, and distributed at Moore and Valley High Schools, proposes to "present written material which is informative and of interest to people whose life styles and/or ideas are presently not accepted by society in general and to provide an outlet for artwork, national high school news and opinion which cannot be or is not provided by the traditional high school press." Editor Charlie Rosenberg describes the students involved as the "concerned."

And what are these students concerned about? Issues common to all

of these papers are: censorship, dress codes, student codes in whose formulation students had had no voice, student rights and power, and boredom with education and classes as such. National problems discussed are the Vietnam war, the draft, racial equality, and poverty. Women's Liberation, drugs, venereal disease—all topics probably unacceptable to the official paper. Topics typical of the official paper as seen by underground paper staffs are: boy and girl of the week, sports, gossip columns, and administrative edicts.

Names of Kentucky's underground papers (*The Eulogy, Free Press, Uprising, Good Life,** *Brotherhood,** *Flag,** *Porno-Smut,** *The Horny Dog,* and *Maidenhead*) obviously were selected for their shock effect as was the use of certain of the better known four-letter words. This use of "off-color and even profane" language is probably one of the characteristics of the underground papers most objected to by parents and administration. Principal Charles O. Dawson of Woodford County High described the Horny Dog as a "disruptive" influence in the school for the above reason.

Another objection made by Principal Dawson was that the *Horny Dog* "is not the pure product of a couple or three students but possibly that of one or more adults in the community or in Lexington."[5] Outside influence was not really as apparent in the *Horny Dog* as it was in *Uprising,* which carried many articles with the FPS dateline, identified as a youth news service, and CHIPS, spelled out as the Cooperative High School Independent Press Syndicate. Another outside source mentioned in *Uprising* was Youth Liberation in Ann Arbor, Michigan. These services provide material for publication and advice, and are run and controlled by high school students who, in some cases, may be influenced by young adults.

In the September 1969 issue of *The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals,* Robert J. Sullivan of Lehigh University calls underground newspapers "The Overrated Threat."[6] In discussing a case in which three students were suspended from school as punishment for publishing an underground paper, Mr. Sullivan is critical of principals in general for the "heavy hand" or "knockout punch." Presenting an alternative to the "knockout," Mr. Sullivan recommends the creation of an atmosphere "likely to accommodate the creative urge of restless students, and giving the existing student press all the freedom it can stand and its staff members the best instruction available."[7]

Dianne Divorky comments this way:

> It is no longer a secret that a growing minority of American high school students are in open revolt against their schools, their parents, and their communities. In part that revolt shares the form, attitudes, and techniques of rebellion in the colleges and

* No copies available.

> universities, a hand-me-down from an older brother, but in part it is indigenous and fresh, peopled and articulated by seventeen-year-olds each of whom is painfully discovering the hypocrisies of the world by himself. In a nation whose model of youth falls somewhere between Henry Aldrich, the junior scientist, and the Eagle Scout (and which has apparently forgotten its Huck Finns) it is almost inevitable that school authorities and public officials respond in a manner which is at best confused. The student is labeled a radical, a revolutionary, explained away as a curious phenomenon, and punished as a child. He finds his existence a threat to all the accepted virtues.[8]

The underground paper, viewed as the disease by school administration, is but one sympton of an epidemic condition known as the generation-communication-gap. An aspect of this condition is called "in loco parentis"; students are treated as children until graduation from high school, and the school authorities fulfill the parental function while the children are at school.

Student attitudes as expressed in the underground press have much to say to administrators if they will but listen. A comprehensive study of Ohio high school students sponsored by the Buckeye Association of School Administrators makes the following recommendations:

> Students, faculty, administrators, and parents should be involved at regular intervals in a consideration of what the role of the high school and education is. . . .
>
> Efforts should be made wherever subject matter is appropriate, to relate what is taught in school to what is occurring today . . . giving discussion time to those who would like to see the patterns of future history changed.
>
> The cry for more communication comes out loud and clear in all questions about school-related issues. Therefore it is suggested that more emphasis be placed on opening more and varied channels for interpersonal communication within each school.[9]

The study recommends frequent talk sessions between administration and small groups representative of different types of students, panel discussion programs with differing positions taken on school and social issues, surveys of student opinion with feedback, a question-answer column in the school paper, open-door office hours well-publicized. The study further recommended involving students in the formulation of rules of student conduct and in curriculum planning, and advised the initiation of courses in drug and sex education.

A 1970 *Quill and Scroll* study titled "The Human Equation and the High School Newspaper" asks the question "Who is to blame for underground newspapers—or do they just happen?" and answers the question in this way:

> Where there is effective communication in a high school for the

minority groups as well as others, there seems to be little need for underground newspapers. Sometimes the newspaper fails simply because principal, adviser, and staff haven't gotten together to establish conditions under which an effective newspaper can be published.[10]

Marcia Lowther, faculty adviser for the Hays (Kansas) High School newspaper offers suggestions for the keeping the school paper above ground. She recommends that the paper be made relevant by reporting issues of the day, including controversial ones. For controversial issues such as drugs, shoplifting, and others of concern to students Miss Lowther suggests in-depth feature articles which present the "pro" and "con" aspects, arrived at through research. She further recommends consideration of the audience for whom the article is written. Other suggestions are: the homecoming queen selection and the Latin Club meeting should be covered, but the paper should not be limited to such coverage. Students should be praised for outstanding work and given by-lines for good stories. In addition, school administrators should give students responsible editorial freedom and should not expect the paper to present a hoped-for image. Opinion should be reserved for the editorial page. And if, despite all this, the underground does appear, ignore it. Many underground papers exist only to criticize, condemn and censor people and ideas or provide freedom in the use of obscene language and pornographic pictures; many exist, on the other hand, to provide expression of feelings and issues important to students.

Miss Lowther's conclusion is that the school with the relevant high school newspaper is not often the school with the flourishing underground paper.[11] Her recommendations agree with a federal court decision which describes school newspapers as "valuable educational tools, [which] serve to aid school administrators by providing them with an insight into student thinking and student problems. They are valuable, peaceful channels of a student protest which should be encouraged, not suppressed."[12]

It is appropriate here to give *Quill and Scroll* the last word: "Certainly we hope that we are preparing teenagers for a society in which the First Amendment will survive."[13]

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13. Campbell, 45.

November 26, 1971

Honorable John B. Breckinridge
Attorney General Commonwealth of Kentucky
Capitol Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
My Dear Mr. Attorney General:

A journalism workshop for members of the high school press held recently at the University of Kentucky revealed that the high school press in Kentucky, with few exceptions, is very tightly controlled and censored by school administrators and faculty sponsors.

According to national leadership in high school journalism, the faculty sponsor should not censor ideas but should edit for (1) libel, (2) pornography and/or obscenity, and (3) inflammatory and irresponsible remarks which lead *directly* to disruption of school activities. Also, definite guidelines should be established by the administration to enable the faculty-sponsor to avoid job-jeopardy.

National publications in high school journalism are of the opinion that first amendment guarantees of freedom of the press should extend to the high school press except in the instances mentioned above. This is evidently not the case in Kentucky. Federal court rulings in other states apparently apply to the individual cases involved and are not clear-cut precedents.

I would like to request an opinion from your office so far as Kentucky's high school press is concerned. Confusion exists because of the juvenile status of high school students and any application of "in loco parentis."

I am compiling information on this subject for the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English and would greatly appreciate the opinion of your office on this matter.

Sincerely,
(Mrs.) Alice W. Manchikes
Route 9, Bryan Station Pike
Lexington, Kentucky 40505

December 14, 1971

Mrs. Alice W. Manchikes
Route 9
Bryan Station Pike
Lexington, Kentucky 40505

Dear Mrs. Manchikes:

You have requested this office to advise school officials as to the proper guidelines to be used by school authorities in censoring or advising high school publications used by students in those institutions.

In researching the problem, we have found a dearth of Kentucky case law. Likewise, we are unaware of any regulation concerning the subject promulgated by the Kentucky Department of Education.

Some opinions of this office have touched the perimeter of the subject. OAG 69-423 advised that school officials could regulate hair styles of students. OAG 70-496, dealing with student publications at the college level, limited censorship to matters not interfering with constitutional considerations.

In *Baker* v. *Downey City Board of Education*, 307 F. Supp. 517 (1969), a California federal court approved the censorship of a high school newspaper with these words:

> "In our case plaintiffs were not disciplined for the criticism of the school administrators and the faculty, or of the Vietnam War, but because of the profane and vulgar *manner* in which they expressed their views and ideas.
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> • • •
>
> ". . . The right to criticize and to dissent is protected to high school students but they may be more strictly curtailed in the mode of their expression and in other manners of conduct than college students or adults. The education process must be protected and educational programs properly administered." (307 F. Supp. 517, 527).

In *Sullivan* v. *Houston Independent School District*, 307 F. Supp. 1328 (1969), the United States District Court, Southern District of Texas, granted an injunction for students expelled because of the student publication which criticized school administrators. The Court held that freedom of speech, which includes publication and distribution of newspapers, may be exercised by high school students on school premises so long as it does not unreasonably interfere with normal school activities, although the administrators can properly regulate the times and places within a school building at which papers may be distributed.

The Supreme Court of the United States in *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 393 U.S. 503, 89 S.Ct. 733, 21 L.Ed.2d 731 (1969) upheld the right of students to wear black arm bands to protest the war in Vietnam. The language of that opinion would appear to cover the regulations of school publications, as well as

other activities. At 393 U.S., p. 509 and 89 S.Ct. at p. 739, the Court stated the following principle:

> "In order for the State in the person of school officials to justify prohibition of a particular expression of opinion, it must be able to show that its action was caused by something more than a mere desire to avoid the discomfort and unpleasantness that always accompany an unpopular viewpoint. Certainly where there is no finding and no showing that engaging in of [sic] the forbidden conduct would 'materially and substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school,' the prohibition cannot be sustained. Burnside v. Byars, supra, 363 F.2d at 749."

In the Tinker case, the Supreme Court further stated, "On the contrary, the action of the school authorities appears to have been based upon an urgent wish to avoid the controversy which might result from the expression, even by the silent symbols of armbands, of opposition to this Nation's part in the conflagration in Vietnam." 89 S.Ct. p. 739.

Therefore, it would seem that school publications are free to express ideas of the students, even though they are controversial, unpopular, or even criticize school administrators so long as they are not libelous, obscene, pornographic, or so inflammatory or irresponsible to such an extent that they endanger or disrupt orderly administration of school activities, or create disciplinary problems which result in or create such disruption.

Of course, the principles herein enunciated are not as difficult to set out as their application to particular fact situations. School administrators in a school district may wish to provide factual guidelines within the framework of these principles, which would be helpful to local school administrators and students alike.

Very truly yours,

JOHN B. BRECKINRIDGE
ATTORNEY GENERAL

By: Martin Glazer
Assistant Attorney General

A JOURNALISM CURRICULUM GUIDE FOR KENTUCKY

By GLEN KLEINE[1]
Eastern Kentucky University

Many high school journalism teachers see little need for a journalism curriculum guide. They are likely to say, "Why should I bother with a journalism curriculum guide? We're lucky if we have enough time during the journalism class to put out the school newspaper and yearbook."

That point of view was not unrepresented when a group of journalism educators and professional communicators met at WAVE-TV in Louisville in 1969 to discuss the need for a journalism curriculum guide for Kentucky schools. After several meetings the group decided that a Kentucky journalism curriculum guide should not have as its focus the mere publication of school newspapers or yearbooks. As Bruce Westley, chairman of the Department of Journalism at the University of Kentucky, wrote at the time, "We run the risk of making the tail (publications) wag the dog (a course that makes a real contribution to the life of the student)."

The task the group first set for itself was the construction of course objectives which could be agreed upon by the diverse membership of the curriculum commission. A measure of the difficulty can be appreciated by looking at the composition of the commission and the interests they represented at the time of their appointment.

Representing the print media were: Albert Allen, Assistant Managing Editor of the *Louisville Times* (a metropolitan daily newspaper); Bob Frey, Editor and Publisher of the *Shelby News* (a weekly newspaper); and James Norris, Jr., Associate Editor of the *Ashland Independent* (a medium-sized daily newspaper). These representatives were recommended by the Kentucky Press Association.

The broadcasting media were represented by W. Dee Huddleston, General Manager of WIEL Radio, and Bob Morris, News Director of WHAS-TV. They were recommended by the Kentucky Broadcasters Association.

The interests of the wire services were represented by the Associated Press Bureau Chief, Dorman Cordell. Public relations interests were represented by Ed Hessel, Promotion Manager of WHAS-TV and Donald Towles, Public Affairs Director of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*.

Higher education journalism programs throughout the state were represented by Robert Adams, Assistant Professor of Journalism at Western Kentucky University; Dr. L. J. Hortin, Chairman of the Journalism Department at Murray State University; Glen Kleine, Assistant Professor of Journalism at Eastern Kentucky University; J. A. McCauley, Professor

[1] Professor Kleine served as chairman of the commission that wrote Kentucky's first journalism curriculum guide.

of Journalism at the University of Kentucky and Executive Secretary of the Kentucky Council for Education in Journalism; Don Orwin, Instructor in Journalism at Somerset Community College; Mrs. Lois Sutherland, Assistant Professor of Journalism at Northern State College; and Bruce Westley, Chairman of the Journalism Department at the University of Kentucky.

Representatives of various journalism organizations were also included. They were: Mrs. Katherine Cooper, English and journalism teacher at Paducah-Tilghman High School in Paducah and State Coordinator of the Journalism Education Association; Mrs. Katherine Kirwan, English and journalism teacher at Waggener High School in Louisville and President of the Kentucky Council for Education in Journalism; and Howard Robey, journalism teacher at Ahrens Trade School and President of the Louisville High School Press Association Advisers.

Other high school teachers represented on the commission were: The Rev. Thomas Barrett, St. Thomas Seminary; Mrs. Constance Cameron, Westport High School; Mrs. Judith Clabes, Henderson High School; Mrs. Jane Crowell, Henry Clay High School; and Miss Gwen Renfro, Williamsburg High School.

Mrs. Martha Ellison, Coordinator of Curriculum Development for the Kentucky Department of Education, met with the group from the outset.

With such varied interests it is not surprising to find that it took nearly a year to agree on a common philosophy, hammer out a set of course objectives, and agree upon the major headings to be included in the curriculum guide.

The course objectives which ultimately guided the curriculum writing committees were:

1. To develop the ability to evaluate the worth of newcasts and publications through wide and intelligent consumption of journalistic efforts.
2. To promote an understanding of the role of the press in a democracy.
3. To appreciate the ethics of the profession of journalism.
4. To acquaint students with the manner in which stories are obtained and written so they can better evaluate and appreciate the performance of professional journalists.
5. To develop skill in the accurate, concise, creative, and forceful expression of ideas.
6. To appreciate the role of functional and creative composition.
7. To develop poise, self-confidence, and tact in meeting news and business contacts.
8. To engage in journalistic enterprises in the school which provides self-expression for students, which relates the student to the school and the school to the community.
9. To prepare students for work on the high school newspaper,

magazine, yearbook, radio station, and/or closed circuit television station.[2]

10. To provide basic foundation for the profession, and the inspiration to pursue it, if that is their goal.

While the diversity of commission membership insured a broad curriculum, there was some apprehension that the professionals might opt for a largely vocational curriculum. Surprisingly the media professionals held an even more liberal view than did many of the journalism educators who seemed more earthbound and were often more nuts-and-bolts oriented. The finished objectives provided amply latitude for specific as well as speculative material.

The next step was to break up the commission into several writing teams and to assign specific topics. This was a crucial time. Although we had decided to include all media in this introduction to mass communications, we had not decided upon how individual units were to be handled. Almost without exception the existing journalism curricula focused on a single medium in each unit. When newspapers, magazines, television, etc. were exhausted, they often added units about producing the school newspaper, the school yearbook, the literary magazine, etc.

We discussed how our students used mass media. We considered what might happen if a journalism teacher skipped a unit in our guide. We considered the strengths and weaknesses of the existing journalism curricula. In the end we decided on a functional approach to the writing of the Kentucky journalism curriculum guide.

We felt Kentucky high school students should understand how various media handled "The Information and Editing Function," "The Interpretative Function," "The Opinion Function," "The Entertainment Function," and "The Economic Function." These ultimately made up most of the units in the guide. The commission knew how the performance of one medium impinges upon the performance of other media. We wanted our students to have a rudimentary concept of this relationship. We felt that a guide organized along functional lines would stand a better chance of achieving this objective.

Although we knew that some of the high school students in these journalism classes would become professional journalists, we also knew that they constituted a very small percentage of those taking journalism courses. All Kentucky high school journalism students, however, will become media consumers. This was a major consideration in the overall construction of the state curriculum guide. We felt it was far more

[2] A school newspaper should be produced in connection with the journalism class. The production of the newspaper should not dominate journalism course content nor should it be entirely an extra-curricular activity if the school offers course work in journalism. Improved school publications is a goal of the journalism course because these publications represent the work of more perceptive, more skilled, and more creative students.

important to develop intelligent consumers of media than to build a course which would recruit and train future journalists. Units constructed with the media consumer in mind were "The Communications Process," "The Historical Development of the Media," "Freedom, Responsibility, and Control of the Media," and "Intelligent Use of the Media."

"The Communications Process," which is the first unit in the guide, attempts to lay a theoretical foundation for communication at all levels. The other three units, located at the end of the guide, deal specifically with the performance of the media within a historical context. Events such as the speeches of Vice President Spiro Agnew criticizing media and litigation relating to the publication of the Pentagon Papers are included as part of the discussions of "Freedom, Responsibility, and Control of the Media." The effectiveness of movie rating systems; what constitutes libel, blasphemy, and obscenity; and freedom of information in local courts and municipal meetings are all topics that are given consideration.

The use of units from this curriculum guide in courses other than journalism was another point of consideration by the commission. It is clear that the commission was concerned that the journalism course in Kentucky become more than a writing techniques course, and more than a way of giving credit to students for putting out the school newspaper or yearbook.

The reciprocal impact of communications on society and social institutions and their impact on communications was paramount in the thinking of the commission. Because of this particular focus we feel that this curriculum guide lends itself to use in a variety of social science courses. The unit on "Freedom, Responsibility, and Control of the Media" and "The Historical Development of the Media" can be used in history and government classes. The unit on "The Economic Function" can be used in economic and government classes.

The commission feels that these units can be used in several other classes as well. The unit on "The Communications Process" can be used in speech and English courses. The unit on "The Entertainment Function" can be used in drama classes, and the unit on "Intelligent Use of the Media," which attempts to develop critical thinking about the use of media, can be used by counselors in study techniques short courses.

While this work is billed as a curriculum guide, it goes beyond simply providing a skeleton around which a semester or a one-year course in journalism can be built. It is intended as a resource book for the old as well as the new journalism teacher. There are four or five possible teaching activities after each section within each unit. We felt these practical teaching suggestions would be especially welcomed by the many new Kentucky journalism teachers. In fact, one of the main reasons for the curriculum guide was to serve the many new journalism teachers who are assigned journalism classes with little or no preparation.

(A study of the comprehensive and standard high schools in the Commonwealth in 1968 revealed that 42 per cent of these schools offered one-year courses in journalism and an additional 29 per cent offered one-semester courses in journalism. The teachers, however, were not well prepared either by training or experience. In fact, 52 per cent indicated that they had no journalism course work in college and 70 per cent had fewer than two journalism courses. Of the total, 62 per cent had taught less than five years and 82 per cent were English teachers. It was clear from the results that ill-prepared young English teachers were most often picked to teach journalism courses. It was largely as a result of this information that the Kentucky Council for Education in Journalism moved to write a curriculum guide. KCEJ decided that while it may not immediately be able to influence the certification practices of the State Department of Education or the assignment practices of Kentucky high school principals, it could at least develop a curriculum guide which would increase the effectiveness of the new journalism teacher.)

This is how the Kentucky Journalism Curriculum Guide came about; the people who were involved, the decision making process along the way, and the rationale for its form and content. A group of highly interested professionals in journalism and journalism education spent nearly three years on this project. We will be greatly disappointed if the guide gathers dust. We hope this guide will be a working tool for Kentucky teachers. We hope that teachers will provide feedback to the Coordinator of Curriculum Development of the State Department of Education on the strengths and weaknesses of this guide. This is, by no means, a perfect document. No effort in blazing new curricular trails in journalism is likely to produce a perfect document. We do, however, feel it is a sound document, and perhaps even more important, a useable teaching tool. We hope you will write to Mr. Donald C. Bale, Assistant Superintendent, Bureau of Instruction, Kentucky State Department of Education, Frankfort, Kentucky, 40601, for your copy of this new guide.[3]

> *Editor's note:* Kentucky—All teaching certificates are issued on the basis of completing an approved teacher education program and the recommendation from the preparing college. If a person holds a Kentucky Standard High School Certificate with a minor of at least 18 semester hours in journalism and if he teaches three years on this certificate, his journalism certificate can then be extended for life.

Many of Kentucky's secondary schools do not offer journalism classes and have no qualified journalism faculty. Therefore the faculty adviser for the school newspaper may not necessarily have had any professional preparation for the job. The University of Kentucky's College of Education does not offer a Bachelor of Arts in Education with a *major* in

[3] September, 1972: ***The Curriculum Guide*** **is now in the mail.**

journalism. A major in journalism may be acquired through the College of Arts and Sciences, plus the additional work required by the state for teacher certification. A minor in journalism in the College of Education consists of 21 semester hours, 15 of which are required courses, with the remaining 6 semester hours elective from an acceptable category list. An emergency permit to teach journalism, called an endorsement, may be granted with as little as 12 hours in journalism.

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Is it not ironical that in a planned society of controlled workers given compulsory assignments
where religious expression is suppressed,
the press controlled,
and all media of communication censored;
where a puppet government is encouraged but denied any real authority;
where great attention is given to efficiency and character reports, and attendance at cultural assemblies is compulsory;
where it is avowed that all will be administered to each according to his needs and performance required from each according to his abilities;
and where those who flee are tracked down, returned and punished for trying to escape–
in short in the middle of the typical large American secondary school–
we attempt to teach "the democratic system"?

Royce van Norman, John Hopkins University
"School Administration: Thoughts on Organization and Purpose." Phi Delta Kappan. 47: (Feb. 66) 315-6.

DEPARTMENTAL

Exercise Exchange, formerly published by the University of Connecticut, will now be published by the University of Vermont. *Exercise Exchange* is a biannual journal for the interchange of successful approaches to the teaching of English in high schools and colleges. Although the journal was previously distributed free of charge, an annual subscription fee of $2.00 for individuals and $3.50 for institutions will now be charged.

Manuscripts should be short and should indicate the class level and courses for which the methods are appropriate. Eliminate footnotes. The editors would also like to publish an occasional article which includes some theoretical background as well as practical application.

Inquiries, manuscripts, and subscriptions should be sent to the editors,

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